

HARMONY FIRE DISTRICT

P.O. Box 360 – 194 Putnam Pike
Harmony, R.I. 02829

The regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was held at the Harmony Fire Station on **Thursday, May 17, 2012.**

Present: Moderator – Raymond Fogarty, Jr.; Chief Stuart Pearson;
Treasurer – Sandra Owens; Tax Collector/Clerk – Kimberly Barber;
Board Members – Louise Michaels, George Kain & James Richards;
Attorney – Fred Mason, Jr.

Absent: Board Member – Milton Huston (excused);
Association Representative – Eric Palmieri, President (excused)

I. – Meeting Called to Order: 7:14 pm by Moderator Fogarty.

II. - Approval of the minutes from the April 26th meeting.

Moderator Fogarty asked the board if there were any discrepancies to note on the minutes from the April 26th meeting. If there are no corrections, he would like to call for a motion to accept them.

Louise made a motion to accept the minutes. Jim seconded the motion.
The motion carried unanimously.

III. – Approval of Bills:

A check register of bills to be paid was provided to all board members in their folder. Moderator Fogarty asked if there were any comments or questions on these expenses. If not, he would like to call for a motion to accept them.

Louise asked what we purchased at J's Broadway Appliance. The Chief replied that we had bought a new air conditioner for the crew day room and a new flat screen TV for the weight room.

Jim made a motion to approve the bills. Louise seconded the motion.
The motion carried unanimously.

IV. - Treasurer's Report:

A Budget Workshop for Fiscal Year 2012-13 was conducted first this evening, before the Regular Meeting was called to Order.

Sandy and Kim supplied the board with a budget worksheets and discussion of the adjusted expenses line-by-line were as follows:

Third Party Billing Fees (60101)

The Chief stated that more revenue is being received, therefore the expense will be greater. We have hit \$100,000 in revenue 10 months into the fiscal year. Therefore we are asking that another \$1,000 be added. The increase in revenue is due to the new third

party billing company and the electronic reporting capturing billable costs more accurately.

Tax Sale Expense (60121)

Kim explained that there were a couple of fees she discovered this year that could not be billed out to the taxpayers. Sandy proposed to raise this expense to \$250.

Call Pay (60205)

The Chief explained that this year we have had more people responding to calls and the call volume is up slightly too. Sandy suggested that we make this expense an even \$46,000.

Incentive Pay (60216)

The Chief explained that this account was used for “bonuses” per say. Individuals who perform duties above and beyond such as “Probationary Class Instructor”, “Driver Training”, etc. This expense shall remain the same.

Employer Payroll Taxes (60220)

This expense has historically been budgeted high and is due to be adjusted. Once the salaries and decided it can be finalized.

Fringe Benefits (60223)

Last year we were paying \$1,431 and this year it is going up to \$1,536. Co-pays for Doctor visits and prescriptions have also gone up. Louise asked if we have ever compared with other companies? Kim stated that our anniversary date is June 1st and it is contractual. Sandy stated that we should have a committee look into our insurance policies. Ray suggested that we create a Capital Item called Risk Insurance Review (Acct# to be Assigned) in the amount of \$2,000 for the new budget to have a professional come in. He will look into getting someone to do this.

Payroll Expense (60225/55)

Jim asked about the two line items. Kim said it appears as two on her QuickBooks reports because it is split to show separate totals for Direct Deposit fees and QuickBooks Payroll annual fee. These amounts are combined on Sandy’s Treasurer’s reports. Louise asked about the Direct Deposit fees, how much are they? Kim stated that Citizens charges \$1.45 per check. Louise asked if we could look into the rates at other banks. Sandy stated that Citizens does not charge us any other account fees though. Sandy proposed the more accurate expense of \$1,100 for these combined accounts.

Medical (60245)

The Chief explained that this account has gone up slightly due to the fact we have so many new members and they are going for physicals and shots. This account will be budgeted at \$1,000.

Training (60320)

The Chief stated that we have proposed a modest increase to the Training budget, bringing it up to \$7,750.

New Capital Expenditure (Acct# to be Assigned)

The Chief said it has recently been brought to his attention that the break room floor was sagging. Structural repairs need to be done, putting in a new cross brace. He has received a ball park estimate of \$8,000. George stated that there used to be a trap door there years ago. The Chief said that the beams are all running in different directions and it is not structurally sound. George asked if there would be enough money in that \$8,000 estimate to cover repairs to the fire ceiling over the boiler since it has probably breeched over the years. The Chief said he was planning to have it sprayed with Fire

Stop during this project. The board decided that \$12,000 should be budgeted for this new capital expense to make sure there would be enough.

Electricity (60505)

Ray said we are proposing to reduce this line item by \$1,000. Kim stated that savings have been realized this past year due to George's Electric Project. In the first 10 months of the fiscal year we only used 31,400 kwh of electricity, compared to 40,160 kwh the previous year. The board gave George a round of applause for this accomplishment. He said that we have to keep the crew informed to turn off lights when they are not in use, we may possibly be able to reduce this expense even more. He also said that we will save money on the purchase of bulbs.

Some discussion followed regarding projected revenue and cash on hand.

Sandy gave the Treasurer's report for the month of April during the regular meeting. Beginning balance April 1st \$398,706.66 and ending balance April 30th \$375,848.20. All routine expenses this month totaling approximately \$35,000. There were also capital expense purchases totaling about \$7,000.

Jim made a motion to accept the April Treasurer's report. George seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

V. - Tax Collector's Report:

Taxes receivable balance as of today's date is \$105,615.26.

Taxes collected in the month of April were \$3,443.55.

Third party billing was healthy in the month of April, \$14,473.69.

Ray asked if Kim could prepare a Year-to-Date comparison of collections for the boards review at the annual meeting. Kim stated that she has collected \$428,000 already, with another \$10,000 ready to be deposited tomorrow. So with the past due notices having gone out April 1st, she is confident she will reach her usual collection average of \$440,000.

Louise made a motion to accept the Tax Collector's report. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

VI. - Chief's Report:

Thank you note received from the Nichols' for the arrangement sent when Linda's Mom passed. Another thank you note was received for a rescue call we responded to.

The Chief attended the Congressional Fire Services Institute in Washington DC last month. He talked with our local elected officials about many things such as grants, grant monies received in RI and broadband. He is supposed to receive written reports from the three of them within the next month or so.

On April 30th there was a Legislative Committee meeting held. Attending were Senator Fogarty and four local Representatives: Winfield, Chippendale, Keable and Marcello. Also in attendance were Chief from Burrillville and Glocester Fire Districts. Discussed was the proposed legislation (H-7141 & H-7397) to cap the maximum fire district tax levy. The fire districts wanted to voice their opposition. We were told that these bills "have no legs" and not to worry.

The beginning of the month the three Glocester Fire Chiefs had a meeting. Discussed was the FCC Narrowbanding Compliancy issue with a deadline January 1, 2013. Ray asked if this was something that

Harmony had been remiss in doing, or if it was something we could take action on individually to correct. The Chief said that he has been picking away at it individually, but the deadline is coming up on us. He said that Kim and himself had been looking at the budget numbers and think they came up with a solution. Kim said that we have excess money left in some accounts that could be reappropriated to others where it is needed. The first would be for \$10,200 to be moved from Vehicle Maintenance (G/L #60410) to Radios (G/L #60310) to complete FCC Narrowbanding Compliance. The second would be for \$4,000 to be moved from Heat (G/L #60510) to Fuel (G/L #60420) because when preparing the budget last year we increased the Fuel line item by 10%, but the expense has actually increased 30% and we are now short.

George asked if that would deplete the Vehicle Maintenance budget. If the expense to repair Engine 23 is considerable we might need to use the remaining budget this year, plus more next year. Discussion followed regarding keeping or getting rid of Engine 23. George asked if the other departments were purchasing the radios with us as a group purchase. The Chief said yes. George said that he feels we should go ahead and take advantage of the group purchase.

Jim made a motion to reappropriate funds of \$10,200 from Vehicle Maintenance (G/L #60410) to Radios (G/L #60310). Louise seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

Louise made a motion to reappropriate funds of \$4,000 from Heat (G/L #60510) to Fuel (G/L #60420). Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

Glocester Firefighter Scholarship application period has ended. Three scholarships were awarded to this year's graduating class and one to a prior year graduate.

On May 15th there was a meeting at the Glocester Police Department between the Police Chief, the three Fire Chiefs and other Glocester department heads. The new Glocester EMA Director, Jason Rhodes, introduced himself at this meeting.

Many of our Capital Projects are either complete or nearing completion. The new built-in trophy cabinet was pointed out to the board. Everyone agreed that the station is looking great!

George made a motion to accept the Chief's report. Louise seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

VII. – Harmony Fire Department & Improvement Association Report:

No report due to Eric's absence.

Louise made a motion was made to congratulate Eric on his upcoming wedding. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

VIII. - Committee Reports:

- a. Policies & Procedures Manual – Milton, Chair
Milt stated that it is a work in progress.
- b. Broadband Work Team – Milton & Stephen Kut, Co-Chairs
No new information.
- c. Property Review Work Team – George & Louise, Co-Chairs
The team will be getting together to move forward. Ray mentioned that this team should look into Foundations to assist with a possible purchase.

IX. - Old Business:

- a. Update on RIDOT proposed Roadwork in Harmony.
The Chief stated that he had talked to Senator Fogarty and that no monies have been released by the Governor for our district or Chepachet.
- b. Pathway to Net Zero – Heat & Electricity
Per the Moderator, this item is to be removed from the agenda.

X. - New Business:

Jim asked if the apparatus analysis was ready. The Chief stated that we have been working on putting together an analysis of the expenses, required repairs and feasibility of doing such maintenance to this piece of apparatus. The board asked that the analysis be e-mailed to them prior to the next meeting for their review.

Louise asked Kim to prepare Thank You notes for the Banquet Committee to thank them for the gifts they handed out at the banquet. They do such a great job each year.

George stated that he has been noticing in local publications about Foster and the group dispatching issues. He thinks that the fire district should be kept apprised of what is going on. Ray said yes, we want to be part of the plan. Some discussion followed. The Chief said that he would send a letter to Chief DelPrete to ask he be kept abreast of any dispatching issues. The Chief will then keep the board advised.

XI. - Public Input: No audience.

XII. – Executive Session:

The Board then announced it would be going into Executive Session regarding matters of personnel. The individuals to be discussed had been notified in writing pursuant to *RIGL 42-46-5*.

The Board recessed for Executive Session at 7:38 pm and the regular meeting reconvened at 8:05 pm.

Louise made a motion to seal the minutes of the Executive Session. George seconded it.
The motion carried unanimously.

The Moderator asked for a motion to ratify the recommendations of the Board concerning the pay raise items discussed during Executive Session.

The first item was concerning the Administrative pay raise of 3%. Louise made the motion. George seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

The second item was the Chiefs annual raises of 2% for each of the 3 years of his new contract. Jim made the motion. George seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

XIII. – Adjournment:


George made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously. The May meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was adjourned at **8:11 pm**.

The Harmony Fire District Annual Meeting will be held on **Saturday, June 2nd, 2012 at 10:00 am.**
Polls will be open Friday, June 1st, from 5:00 – 8:00 pm and Saturday, June 2nd, from 8:00 – 9:45 am.

The next regular monthly meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board
is scheduled for **Thursday, 6:30 pm, May 17, 2012.**

An e-mail reminder of these dates and times will be sent by the Clerk to the Board at their request.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kimberly S. Barber".

Kimberly S. Barber
Tax Collector/Clerk